

NEWCASTLE-UNDER-LYME BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE MANAGEMENT TEAM'S

REPORT TO

Cabinet
07 July 2021

Report Title: Housing Strategy 2021-2024

Submitted by: Executive Director - Commercial Development & Economic Growth

Portfolios: Community Safety and Wellbeing

Ward(s) affected: All Wards within the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme

Purpose of the Report

To gain approval for the draft Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Housing Strategy 2021 – 2024, which sets out the strategic priorities for the next four years, to be issued for public consultation prior to being formally adopted.

Recommendation

That:

- 1. The Draft Housing Strategy 2021-2024 is approved for an eight week public consultation.**
- 2. The Executive Director – Commercial Development & Economic Growth and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing be authorised to agree the final version for publication following the public consultation stage.**

Reasons

The current housing strategy was adopted in 2016 for a duration of for five years. It is considered an appropriate time to review and refresh the housing strategy, to evaluate the current issues and to formulate strategic priorities.

1. Background

- 1.1 Housing is integral and important to the lives of people. Local authorities regularly formulate and update housing strategies, as a way to develop the necessary framework on how it will engage and work with our many stakeholders and partners to deliver housing and housing related services within its area.
- 1.2 The current housing strategy for the Borough was adopted in 2016. The duration of this was for five years.

2. Issues

- 2.1 The Housing Strategy 2021- 24 has established three housing priorities, which are thematic, cross cutting and acknowledge the correlation between different policies areas and how they interplay with each another. These are:
 - Housing, Health and Wellbeing and Partnerships,
 - Housing and Economic Recovery,
 - Homelessness and Rough Sleeping.

2.2 Under these priorities, a number of objectives have been set. These are:

Priority 1 Housing, Health and Wellbeing and Partnerships

- To integrate the housing and health and wellbeing agendas.
- To improve housing standards and the energy efficiency of the housing stock.

Priority 2 Housing and Economic Recovery

- To develop a housing market that is vibrant and economically prosperous, which will meet the needs of our residents.
- To facilitate the development of a range of affordable housing, that meets identified housing needs.
- To take on the direct role of developing housing, specifically on Council's own land.
- To contribute to the economic regeneration of the high street by incorporating mixed use developments within the town centres.

Priority 3 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

- To provide early intervention and partnership working to prevent homelessness.
- To support those who are faced with homelessness issues; specifically those rough sleeping.
- To operate a housing allocation system; both registration and allocation which will allow those in housing need to access appropriate social housing.
- To create more emergency and temporary accommodation options which are cost effective and have the appropriate support.

2.3 Early consultation has been undertaken with partners and stakeholders, to get a 'sense-check'. A steer from them about the priorities and objectives, before, drafting a detailed strategy, to ensure that the strategy addresses the most pertinent issues and not those that were 'perceived' to be important.

2.4 Under each objectives, actions have been identified. These have been placed in an Action Plan, which is an appendix to the Strategy. It is intended that the actions will be incorporated into annual service plans. This will ensure these actions are enshrined into actual work programmes, with annual reporting on their achievability.

3. **Proposal**

3.1 That the Draft Housing Strategy 2021-2024 is approved for an eight week public consultation

3.2 That The Executive Director – Commercial Development & Economic Growth and Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing be authorised to agree the final version for publication following the public consultation stage.

3.3 That comments and observations received from the public consultation will be noted and where appropriate will be incorporated into the final Housing Strategy.

4. **Reasons for Proposed Solution**

4.1 The current housing strategy was adopted in 2016. The duration of this was for five years. It is considered an appropriate time to review and refresh the housing strategy, to evaluate the current issues and to formulate strategic priorities.

5. **Options Considered**

5.1 The option to 'do nothing', would mean that the current housing strategy, drafted in 2016, would remain in place. Housing strategies must take into account current issues and should be refreshed and updated. Failure to do so, would mean that the strategic priorities and objectives may become obsolete and based on housing and economic realities that are no longer valid and relevant.

5.2 As a period of five years has passed, it is considered appropriate to review and refresh the housing strategy, to evaluate the current issues and to formulate strategic priorities.

6. Legal and Statutory Implications

6.1 Although, the formulation of the housing strategy is not a statutory duty, it is an important strategic document that has implications for a number of policy areas; planning policy, housing standards, disabled facilities grants and partnership working.

7. Equality Impact Assessment

7.1 The Housing Strategy is not likely to have an adverse impact on the residents of the Borough. It is common place that at the delivery stage of the housing services; the policies and processes are subject to an EIA.

8. Financial and Resource Implications

8.1 Under each objectives, actions have been identified which form the action plan. It is intended that the action plan will feed into existing and future service plans. This will ensure that the actions within the Housing strategy are enshrined into actual work programmes, with annual reporting on their achievability. This is likely to have financial and resource implications which will be factored into the service plans.

9. Major Risks

9.1 There are no major risks associated with approving the Housing Strategy 2020-24 for consultation and subsequent approval. Activities arising from the strategy will be incorporated into annual service plans which undergo risk assessment processes.

10. UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG)

10.1 As the priorities identified in the Housing Strategy are thematic, cross cutting. They will impact a number of UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG). These are:-

- End poverty in all its forms everywhere
- Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
- Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
- Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
- Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
- Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts





11. **Key Decision Information**

11.1 This is not a key decision as the costs arising directly out of the Strategy will not exceed the Key Decision threshold.

12. **Earlier Cabinet/Committee Resolutions**

12.1 None

13. **List of Appendices**

13.1 Draft Housing Strategy 2021- 2024.

14. **Background Papers**

14.1 None